



Memorandum of Support: A10721A

A. 10721A: CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY proposing an amendment to article 14 of the constitution, in relation to allowing public utility lines and bicycle paths on certain state lands in the forest preserve and establishing a forest preserve health and safety land account.

Protect the Adirondacks supports a new Constitutional Amendment for Article XIV, the “forever wild” provision of the NYS Constitution, introduced by the State Assembly Conservation Committee Chairman Steve Englebright. This proposed amendment authorizes location of broadband, other utilities and bike paths along state highway corridors traversing the Forest Preserve, authorizes location of broadband and other utilities in county, town and village road corridors that traverse the Forest Preserve, and authorizes the creation of a 250-acre “health and safety land account” for the Adirondack and Catskill Parks principally for maintenance and management of local roads and for location of utilities. The “health and safety land account” can also be used for the location and construction of municipal water wells.

This new legislation meets the critical needs identified by Adirondack local governments for greater flexibility in management and maintenance of local highways and bridges, utilizing state and local highways for broadband, other utilities and bike paths. This new amendment also creates a new health and safety land account that provides Forest Preserve lands for approved uses for various highway maintenance projects and the construction of wells for public water supplies.

The new Constitutional Amendment enables massive expansion of broadband throughout the Adirondacks and Catskills, which is important for local residents, economic and community development, public health and safety, as well as greatly improves the ability of local governments to manage local roads that traverse the Forest Preserve.

The amendment requires legislative approval of an administration and implementation plan. The health and safety land account of 250 acres will need to be replaced by new Forest Preserve lands.

This legislation constitutes “1st passage” of a new Constitutional Amendment. “2nd passage” would take place in the next successive legislature, most likely in 2017. The amendment would then need to be approved by the voters in November 2017.

For all of these reasons, Protect the Adirondacks strongly supports A.10721A.

For more information:

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